

A SET OF PRAYER EQUIPMENT AS A DOWRY: A SYMBOL OF PURITY OR A REFLECTION OF GENDER INEQUALITY

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Abstract

This study investigates the common practice of giving a set of prayer equipment as a dowry (mahar) in marriage traditions in Bengkak Village, Indonesia. While the dowry in Islam is intended as a form of honor and protection for women, its symbolic interpretation in local customs may overshadow its functional role. The research explores whether such a practice reflects genuine piety or reproduces gender inequality. This qualitative descriptive research employed a combination of literature review and semi-structured interviews with community members, including brides, grooms, religious leaders, and local elders. Data were analyzed thematically to identify both the cultural symbolism and the socio-legal implications of the dowry practice. The results show that while the set of prayer equipment is symbolically tied to ideals of religiosity and marital harmony, it often fails to provide material security for women, particularly in cases of divorce. Negotiations over dowry value and form are frequently limited by tradition, leaving little space for women to advocate for more substantial or economically protective dowries. The study is context-specific to Bengkak Village and may not fully capture dowry practices in urban or more economically diverse settings. The reliance on qualitative data limits generalizability but offers rich insights into local perceptions and gender dynamics. By linking religious symbolism with gender justice analysis, this study contributes to the discourse on how Islamic marital practices can be reinterpreted to promote both spiritual meaning and equitable protection of women's rights. It highlights the need for community awareness to negotiate dowries transparently and fairly.

Keywords: *Dowry; Gender Justice; Marriage; Prayer Equipment; Tradition; Women's Rights.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji praktik umum pemberian seperangkat alat salat sebagai mahar dalam tradisi pernikahan di Desa Bengkak, Indonesia. Meskipun mahar dalam Islam dimaksudkan sebagai bentuk penghormatan dan perlindungan bagi perempuan, interpretasi simboliknya dalam adat setempat dapat mengaburkan fungsi utamanya. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi apakah praktik tersebut mencerminkan kesalehan yang tulus atau justru mereproduksi ketidaksetaraan

gender. Penelitian deskriptif kualitatif ini menggunakan kombinasi studi pustaka dan wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan anggota masyarakat, termasuk mempelajari perempuan, mempelajari laki-laki, tokoh agama, dan sesepuh desa. Data dianalisis secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi simbolisme budaya serta implikasi sosial-hukum dari praktik pemberian mahar tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun seperangkat alat salat secara simbolis dikaitkan dengan nilai-nilai religiusitas dan keharmonisan rumah tangga, praktik ini sering kali gagal memberikan jaminan material bagi perempuan, terutama dalam kasus perceraian. Negosiasi mengenai nilai dan bentuk mahar kerap dibatasi oleh tradisi, sehingga ruang bagi perempuan untuk mengadvokasi mahar yang lebih substansial atau lebih melindungi secara ekonomi menjadi sangat terbatas. Penelitian ini bersifat kontekstual pada Desa Bengkak dan mungkin tidak sepenuhnya merepresentasikan praktik mahar di wilayah perkotaan atau daerah dengan keragaman ekonomi yang lebih luas. Ketergantungan pada data kualitatif membatasi generalisasi namun memberikan wawasan mendalam mengenai persepsi lokal dan dinamika gender. Dengan mengaitkan simbolisme keagamaan dengan analisis keadilan gender, penelitian ini berkontribusi pada diskursus tentang bagaimana praktik pernikahan Islam dapat ditafsirkan ulang untuk mempromosikan makna spiritual sekaligus perlindungan yang adil terhadap hak-hak perempuan. Studi ini menyoroti perlunya kesadaran masyarakat untuk merundingkan mahar secara transparan dan adil.

Kata kunci: Mahar; Keadilan Gender; Pernikahan; Perlengkapan Salat; Tradisi; Hak Perempuan.

A. Introduction

Marriage is regarded in Islam as an act of worship that completes half of one's faith. Through marriage, a believer safeguards personal honor and protects themselves from actions prohibited by religious teachings. The marital bond extends beyond the mere legitimization of physical relations between the sexes; it embodies a commitment to building a harmonious and high-quality family.¹ Islamic Sharia has regulated all the principles of matters relating to Allah SWT and fellow human beings. One of the principles of matters regulated by the Islamic religion is the dowry in marriage.

A dowry is a gift from a man to a woman without coercion, but purely out of the man's willingness. A man's giving of a dowry to a woman he intends to propose to demonstrates his responsibility in building a household.² The dowry is a

¹ Syamsiah Nur, dkk, *Fikih Munakahat Hukum Perkawinan Dalam Islam*, (Tasikmalaya: CV. Hasna Pustaka, 2022), page.3

² Riyan Erwin Hidayat, dkk, "Mahar Perspektif Ulama Kontemporer (Studi Atas Pemikiran Muhammad Syahrur Dan Wahbah Az-Zuhaili)", *Jurnal Maslahah*, 13.1 (2022)

form of honor and respect from a husband for his wife, not a form of exchange for the woman he intends to marry³ The dowry is a form of honor and respect from the husband towards his wife, not as a substitute for exchange value for the woman he is going to marry.⁴

Furthermore, in Islam, a dowry is obligatory for men who wish to propose to a woman. This is also clearly regulated in the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI). Article 30 explains that the prospective groom is obliged to provide a dowry to the prospective bride, in an amount, form, and type agreed upon by both parties. The provisions regarding the amount of the dowry are not specifically discussed. Article 31 of the KHI explains that the determination of the dowry is based on the principles of simplicity and convenience, in accordance with Islamic recommendations.

Furthermore, the prospective husband can determine the appropriate dowry amount through mutual agreement between both parties, taking into account the husband's financial capabilities and local customs..⁵

The amount of dowry the groom will give to the bride depends on the agreement of both parties, as there is no text that specifically discusses the nominal value of a dowry. Regarding the minimum dowry amount, for example, some scholars believe that there is a minimum dowry amount, namely at least the price of an iron ring (a piece of iron), citing a hadith that states so. Meanwhile, other scholars argue that the dowry does not have to be in the form of material goods; services (non-material) can also be a dowry, also based on cases (hadith) that justify this (the case of memorizing the Qur'an).⁶

The practice of giving dowries in society has undergone a shift in values and forms. This is one way people express their appreciation for wedding gifts. The form and value of dowries vary depending on the customs and traditions of each

³ Muhammad Ridwan, "Kedudukan Mahar Dalam Perkawinan", *Jurnal perspektif* Vol. 13, No.1, Januari 2020, page. 44.

⁴ Zainal Muttaqin, *Fenomena Pemberian Mahar Unik Pada Pernikahan Pemuda Muslim Sasak (Studi Kasus Di Kabupaten Lombok Timur)*, Tesis, Mahasiswa Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram, 2022, page.2

⁵ Nurul Asmaul husnam, dkk, "Eksistensi Mahar dalam pernikahan di Dusun Tonasa Desa songing Kecamatan Sinjai Selatan Kabupaten Sinjai", *Jurnal Macora*, Vol. 1, No. 2, (Agustus 2020), page.5

⁶ Khoiruddin Nasution, *Hukum Perkawinan I*, cet. Ke-1 (Yogyakarta: ACAdemia+TAZZAFA, 2024), page. 143.

region. For example, the phenomenon of giving a set of prayer equipment as a dowry occurs in Bengkak Village, Wongsorejo, Banyuwangi. This dowry, consisting of prayer equipment, has become a tradition among the Bengkak Wongsorejo community. The majority of Bengkak Village residents are Madurese, who highly uphold the teachings of Islam. The concept of a simple dowry is very common among the Bengkak Village community. According to data from the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) in the Wongsorejo sub-district of Banyuwangi, 78 married couples were recorded as having married between 2024 and 2025. Interviews with Firdaus, the village head of Bengkak, revealed that the majority of dowries used were prayer equipment, representing 95% of the total, and cash, representing 5%.⁷

This dowry, a set of prayer equipment, is practiced by all levels of society, from the wealthy to the humble. The dowry of this set of prayer equipment is usually packaged in a variety of designs. The contents of the dowry consist of a prayer mat, a mukena, prayer beads, and a Quran. In addition to the set of prayer equipment, several pieces of money are usually added. Normatively, there is no textual evidence prohibiting the giving of a dowry in the form of a set of prayer equipment. Islamic law also does not specify the amount of dowry that a man must give to his prospective wife. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) indicated that the dowry is an agreement between the bride and groom. The form of dowry that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught when marrying his companions was memorization of the Quran and a plain iron ring.⁸ So, the practice of giving a dowry in the form of a set of prayer equipment remains valid and permissible because it does not violate Islamic law. However, this argument is often misinterpreted by some, believing that a simple dowry is sufficient, not an extravagant one. Therefore, the man always dominates, leaving the woman with no bargaining power.

⁷ Wawancara dengan Firdaus, Pengulu, Gondokusuma, Sapen, Yogyakarta, Tanggal 4 Juni 2025

⁸ Imam Muslim, *Shahih Muslim bi Syarh Al-Nawawi*, Beirut: Darul Kutub Al-Ilmiah, Jilid 9, page. 211-214.

We focus too much on the hadith explaining the simplicity of the dowry, leading us to believe that a simple dowry is sufficient. If we look at the history of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the Sirah (History) mentions that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) married Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her) at the age of 25, while Khadijah was around 40 at the time. Although Khadijah was a noble and wealthy woman, the Prophet still provided a dowry as a form of respect and to fulfill the requirements for a valid marriage in Islam. Some narrations mention that the Prophet's dowry was 500 dirhams.⁹

It's important to note that the evidence surrounding the provision of a dowry is flexible, depending on the circumstances. In the case of a man who had nothing to offer as a dowry, he approached the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to complain about his situation. The Prophet then asked him if he had memorized any verses of the Quran. The man replied that he had one chapter, and the Prophet then married the woman he had proposed to him with the dowry being that portion of the Quranic verse.¹⁰ If the groom's circumstances and wealth are significant, the dowry should be tailored to his social status. It would be inappropriate to give a dowry consisting solely of prayer equipment.

In today's era, the dowry serves not only a symbolic and social purpose but also has a legal basis that can contribute to the protection of women's rights.¹¹ Attention to the value and form of the dowry in today's world will improve the well-being and security of women. The practice of a simple dowry, consisting of a set of prayer tools, remains valid and permissible as it does not violate Islamic law and poses no normative problem. However, from a gender perspective, this practice is not entirely fair to women. An overly modest dowry reduces women's bargaining power, despite the fact that women also play a role in building a household. This simple dowry practice often occurs in rural areas, where men consistently dominate the marriage process.

⁹ Khoiruddin Nasution, *Hukum Perkawinan I*, cet. Ke-1 (Yogyakarta: ACAdemia+TAZZAFA, 2024), page.142.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*...page.143

¹¹ Undang-Undang Perkawinan No, 20 Tahun 2011, Pasal 25.

The purpose of this study is to examine the practice of giving a set of prayer tools as a dowry in the tradition of Bengkak Wongsorejo Village, Banyuwangi, and the reasons and motivations of the local community for always including a set of prayer tools as a dowry in wedding traditions. Furthermore, the study aims to analyze whether a set of prayer tools as a dowry represents gender equality for women. Furthermore, it aims to provide the community of Bengkak Village, Banyuwangi, with new perspectives on the value of the dowry a man should give to a woman he intends to marry.

B. Methods

This study adopted a qualitative research design with a sociological approach, employing descriptive–analytical methods to examine the use of prayer equipment as a dowry in Muslim marriage practices in Bengkak Village, Banyuwangi, from a gender justice perspective. Data were collected through a literature review and semi-structured interviews with purposively selected informants, including women who had received prayer equipment as a dowry, local religious leaders, and marriage practitioners. Fieldwork was conducted over a three-month period, during which the researcher engaged directly with the community to build rapport and gather in-depth insights. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to identify patterns in the symbolic meanings, socio-cultural motivations, and implications of the dowry practice for women’s position in marriage. To ensure validity, data triangulation and member-checking techniques were applied.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Dowry

A dowry is a gift from a man to a woman without any coercion, purely out of the man's willingness.¹² Dowry is an obligation that must be paid by the husband to become the wife's right. (او تقرضوا لهن فريضة).¹³ However, this dowry obligation is

¹² Riyan Erwin Hidayat, dkk, “Mahar Perspektif Ulama Kontemporer (Studi Atas Pemikiran Muhammad Syahrur Dan Wahbah Az-Zuhaili)”, *Jurnal Maslahah*, 13.1 (2022).

¹³ Khoiruddin Nasution, *Hukum Perkawinan I*, cet. Ke-1 (Yogyakarta: ACAdemia+TAZZAFA, 2024), hlm. 144

not a requirement for the validity of a marriage contract.¹⁴ If a marriage contract does not specify a dowry, the contract is still valid because the dowry is not part of the pillars of marriage. The Fathul Mu'in book lists five pillars of marriage: the prospective groom, the prospective bride, a guardian, two witnesses, and the *ijab qabul* (consent to marriage/*sighat*).¹⁵ There are no specific provisions for determining the type and amount of a dowry. Article 31 of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) explains that the determination of a dowry is based on the principles of simplicity and convenience, in accordance with Islamic principles.

Islam does not specifically limit the type or amount of a dowry. There is no fixed standard for the value of a dowry, as long as the item is halal, useful, and legally available. This demonstrates the flexibility of Islamic law in adapting the dowry to the social and economic conditions of the community.¹⁶ The future husband can determine the appropriate dowry amount through mutual agreement between both parties, taking into account the financial capabilities of the husband and the customs prevailing in the area.¹⁷ The basic principle is that the dowry or bride price must be something that can provide benefits and is something that is halal to wear, own or consume.¹⁸ As Imam Syafi'i argued, "Everything that is valuable and can be valuable to others can be used as a dowry.

In the view of Islamic law, the dowry belongs entirely to the wife. Once the dowry is handed over by the husband, ownership of it is absolutely in the hands of the wife.¹⁹ A husband has no right to use or utilize the dowry without his wife's

¹⁴ Tajul Iflah, "Standarisasi Kadar Mahar Anak Perempuan Tunggal (Studi Kasus Kabupaten Pidie Aceh)," *Tesis* Mahasiswa Universitas Sunan Kalijaga (2024), hlm. 2.

¹⁵ Zainuddin al-malibari, *Fathul Mu'in bi Syarah Qurratil 'Ain bi Mubimmati ad-Din*, cet. Ke-4 (Maktabah As-Salam, 2020), hlm. 158.

¹⁶ Nihayati, Dini Arifah. "Mahar Unik Dan Mahar Bernilai Fantastis Dalam Perspektif Fikih Munakahat." *MASADIR: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 2.1 (2022), hlm. 310-323.

¹⁷ Nurul Asmaul husnam, dkk, "Eksistensi Mahar dalam pernikahan di Dusun Tonasa Desa songing Kecamatan Sinjai Selatan Kabupaten Sinjai", *Jurnal Macora*, Vol. 1, No. 2, (Agustus 2020), hlm 5.

¹⁸ Hikmatul Karomah, "Seperangkat Alat Shalat Sebagai Mahar Pernikahan Perspektif Hadits", *El-Nubumnah: Jurnal studi Hadis*, Vol, 1, No. 1, (2023), hlm. 49.

¹⁹ Harsya, Rabith Madah Khulaili, and Umdah Aulia Rohmah. "Konsep Mahar Pekawinan dalam Fiqh Kontemporer Analisis Mubadalah." *AL-MANHAJ: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial Islam* 4.2 (2022), page. 495-504.

consent. A husband may use the dowry given to his wife if she voluntarily consents without coercion. Otherwise, the husband has no rights to it.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the dowry is the wife's full right, both to assess and choose, and therefore, it is conditional. A wife can determine the dowry as she wishes, but must still adjust it to her prospective husband's circumstances.²⁰ The dowry is entirely the right of the wife and may not be used without the wife's permission.

2. The Phenomenon of Establishing a Set of Prayer Equipment as a Wedding Dowry

The phenomenon of using a set of prayer equipment as a dowry illustrates a shift in symbolic values within Indonesian wedding culture. While under Islamic law, a dowry can be anything of value agreed upon by both parties, the choice of a set of prayer equipment carries strong religious significance, symbolizing the hope that a household will be built on worship and obedience to God. However, this phenomenon also demonstrates a societal tendency to treat religious symbolism as a formality, sometimes without a deeper understanding of the meaning of the dowry itself. In a social context, the use of prayer items as a dowry can also be influenced by economic pressures or the desire to appear modest yet religious, leading this practice to become a kind of "standard practice" in many marriages, particularly among young Muslims.²¹

The dowry, which consists of a set of prayer equipment, is usually packaged in various forms. It consists of a mukena, prayer beads, a prayer mat, and a Quran. In this case, clarity is needed in determining the dowry in marriage, because the dowry mentioned is a set of prayer tools during the marriage contract, but includes prayer beads and the Quran. The prayer beads and the Quran are not included in the set of prayer tools. In this case, the provision of a dowry has an ambiguous meaning.

²⁰ Sylvia Kurnia Ritonga, "Mahar Seperangkat Alat Shalat Dalam Tinjauan Hukum Islam: Tradisi Mahar Pernikahan Pada Masyarakat batak Angkola." *Jurnal Al-Maqasid*, Vol. 6, No.1 (Juni, 2020), page. 130.

²¹ Karomah, Hikmatul. "Seperangkat Alat Shalat Sebagai Mahar Pernikahan Perspektif Hadis." *ElNubuwwah Jurnal Studi Hadis* 1.1 (2023), page.44-59.

There must be clarity in the provision of a dowry, because the dowry is the wife's right.²²

The practice of giving a dowry of prayer equipment in the wedding tradition in Bengkak Wongsorejo Village, Banyuwangi, consists of: a prayer robe, prayer beads, a prayer mat, and a neatly wrapped Quran. According to the results of an interview conducted by the author with a community leader named Alif.²³

A dowry of prayer equipment is always included in the marriage contract. During the marriage contract, the prospective husband mentions a dowry of prayer equipment. Alif added that the dowry given to the prospective wife is not only a set of prayer equipment, but also includes additional dowries in the form of gold and money. However, only a set of prayer equipment is mentioned in the marriage contract. The reason the dowry is always a set of prayer equipment is because, according to him, it has religious significance and the hope that the marriage will be a marriage of steadfastness in worshipping Allah swt.

3. Dowry as an Instrument of Justice for Women and Protection of Women's Rights from a Gender Perspective

Islamic law does not specifically stipulate the value of a dowry. Simplicity and ease are encouraged in Islam, not burdening a man who wishes to propose to a woman as his wife.²⁴ From a normative perspective, giving a dowry in the form of a set of prayer equipment is still valid and permissible. This is because it does not violate Islamic law. But does giving a dowry in the form of a set of prayer equipment constitute justice for women?

In some contexts, the dowry is considered an instrument for protecting women's rights.²⁵ They have rights over themselves, such as in the event of a

²² Jamatia, Purna Laxmi. "Dowry System: An Impediment to Women Empowerment." *Journal of Media, Culture and Communication* 22 (2022), page. 8-13.

²³ Results of interviews with sources (SA)

²⁴ Trigiyatno, Ali. "The Comparative Study of Dowry Regulations In Indonesia and Morocco Legislations." *Jurnal Syariah* 29.2 (2021), page.239-264

²⁵ Ormrod, W. Mark. "Women's Issues in Parliament: Dower." *Women and Parliament in Later Medieval England*. Cham: Springer International, (2020), page.75-93.

divorce. When a woman is divorced by her husband, she automatically loses her provider.²⁶

This is where the dowry becomes very useful. When the dowry was given in the form of one hectare of land or one hundred million rupiah, she can use the dowry as security and pocket money. The dowry can provide economic protection for women in marriage. By having the right to a dowry, women have access to economic resources that can help them in their married life and after divorce.²⁷

From a gender perspective, the gift of a set of prayer tools as a dowry often sparks debate over its symbolic meaning and substantive justice for women.²⁸ Symbolically, a set of prayer tools is considered a form of spirituality and piety, but from a gender perspective, questions arise as to whether such a gift adequately represents respect and economic protection for women.²⁹ In patriarchal societies, the dowry serves not only as a legal requirement for marriage but also as a form of recognition of women's value and position within the household.³⁰ When the dowry is reduced to a set of prayer tools of little material value, this may reflect an unequal power relationship that neglects women's economic rights after marriage or upon divorce. Therefore, gender justice demands that the dowry be viewed not only from a formal religious perspective but also from the perspective of social and economic justice, to ensure women's equal and protected position within marriage.

The importance of understanding and using dowries in today's world is crucial for men and women who are getting married. The bargaining process in determining the dowry is carried out by both parties.³¹ In this case, men tend to have

²⁶ Rossi, Francesca. "Divortium e tutela del coniuge "debole": mulier, uxor, mater." *La Nuova Giuridica* 2.2 (2022), page.78-103.

²⁷ Apriyanti, "Historiografi Mahar Dalam Pernikahan, An Nisa'a," *Jurnal Kajian Gender Dan Anak* 12, No. 2 (2017).

²⁸ Harsya, Rabith Madah Khulaili, and Umdah Aulia Rohmah. "Konsep Mahar Pekawinan dalam Fiqh Kontemporer Analisis Mubadalah." *AL-MANHAJ: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial Islam* 4.2 (2022), page.495-504.

²⁹ Deubel, T. "Gift-Giving as Social Capital: Changing Customs of Şahrāwi Women's Gift Exchange in Laayoune." *Hesperis Tamuda* 55 (2020), page. 305-21.

³⁰ Gruenbaum, Ellen, Brian D. Earp, and Richard A. Shweder. "Reconsidering the role of patriarchy in upholding female genital modifications: analysis of contemporary and pre-industrial societies." *International Journal of Impotence Research* 35.3 (2023), page. 202-211.

³¹ Ellart, Carlos Sánchez-Moreno. "Pacta dotalia." *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2013), hlm.1-2.

an advantage in determining the dowry value to be given to women. There are several reasons why women often give in to their rights, including strong traditions within their environment and fear of social stigma when asking for a large dowry.³²

Justice for women regarding their rights in dowry matters is not entirely equitable. Women in rural areas tend to lack bargaining power. When determining their dowry, they tend to follow established traditions. Understanding the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) regarding the simplicity and ease of asking a man for a dowry has become one of the reasons they accept generous dowry offers. Today, the importance of considering the value of a wedding dowry is not merely symbolic, but rather an instrument for protecting women's rights.

The dowry plays a crucial role in marriage. Among its essential roles are:³³ (a) as protection of women's rights, (b) as a husband's responsibility, (c) as proof of love and responsibility, (d) as safeguarding women's dignity, (e) as financial and economic protection. Thus, it can be concluded that although Islamic law does not specify a specific form or value for a dowry, and a set of prayer equipment is still valid as a dowry, the question of justice for women remains an important issue that requires further study.

In practice, the dowry should not only be understood as a symbol of the sanctity of marriage, but also as an instrument for protecting women's economic rights, both during marriage and in the event of divorce.³⁴ When the value of the dowry is oversimplified without considering women's future needs, potential injustice can arise. Therefore, there needs to be a shared understanding between men and women to discuss the dowry openly and equally, without the pressure of tradition or fear of social stigma. It is also crucial to shift societal mindsets so that

³²Rahman, Mohammad Sadikur. "Dowry, the oppression of women and femicide in Bangladesh." *Journal of Comparative Social Work* 13.1 (2018), page.103-123.

³³ Muhammad Juni Beddu, "Mahar Dalam Tinjauan Hukum Islam: Sebuah Instrumen Perlindungan Hak-Hak Perempuan Dalam Pernikahan", *Al-Mutharabah Jurnal penelitian dan kajian sosial keagamaan*, Vol. 21 No. 01 (Januari-Juni 2024), page. 476-477.

³⁴ Harsya, Rabith Madah Khulaili, and Umdah Aulia Rohmah. "Konsep Mahar Pekawinan dalam Fiqh Kontemporer Analisis Mubadalah." *AL-MANHAJ: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial Islam* 4.2 (2022), page.495-504.

women are not viewed negatively when they fight for their right to a dowry that is appropriate and truly beneficial in their lives.

D. Conclusion

Marriage in Islamic teachings is not merely understood as a physical bond between a man and a woman, but also as a form of worship with high spiritual value. The goal is to build a harmonious family blessed by Allah SWT. In this bond, the dowry plays a crucial role as one of the requirements for a valid marriage. Giving a dowry is not only a form of respect for the woman but also demonstrates the man's responsibility and seriousness in building a household. Although Islam encourages simplicity in dowries, it must still consider fairness and mutual agreement, especially for the woman as the recipient. The tradition of giving a dowry in the form of a set of prayer tools, common in many communities, including in Bengkak Wongsorejo Village, Banyuwangi, reflects the influence of cultural and religious symbols on marriage practices. While this is valid according to Islamic law, an overly symbolic and simplistic approach to the dowry can neglect the protection of women's rights and well-being, especially when the marriage faces problems or ends in divorce. Therefore, it is important to understand that the dowry also serves as a legitimate form of economic security for women, not merely a spiritual symbol. Thus, there needs to be a shift in society's perspective on determining the dowry. Open dialogue between the prospective bride and groom is key to creating a fair and mutually respectful agreement. Awareness of the importance of the dowry as part of protecting women's rights must be fostered, so that marriage practices not only prioritize tradition and symbolism but also provide tangible benefits to the wife's life. Within this framework, the dowry should be understood as a form of respect, protection, and fulfillment of women's rights in building a healthy and just household.

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